

What's Happening in Suicide Prevention in Montana

Wanting to keep you informed and collaborating to find a solution

As most of you know, Montana has one of the highest rates of suicide in the nation, and has for more than three decades. Suicide and the stigma against mental illness has been part of the Montana culture for a hundred years. This isn't going to change quickly. It is going to take a cultural shift in the way we think and an openness to talk about these issues. The purpose of this newsletter is to inform the public of ongoing prevention activities taking place in communities around the state, identifying community advocates, and encouraging input from all Montanans on how we can address the issue of suicide in our state.

NAMI and others bring Master QPR trainer to Helena

On May 8th and 9th, NAMI-Helena, AFSP-Montana, Safeway, Town Pump, Butte CARES, and the Montana DPHHS, sponsored a QPR Gatekeeper Instructor Training for Suicide Prevention in Helena for 60 participants from around the state. The workshop featured QPR Institute Master Trainer Debbie Traeder and other experienced QPR trainers. *Question, Persuade, and Refer* (QPR) is a SAMHSA best practice for suicide prevention. Like CPR, QPR is an emergency response to someone in a suicide crisis. Like CPR & the Heimlich Maneuver, early recognition of warning signs, early intervention, professional assessment and care saves lives.



The two-day certification course trained Instructors to teach *QPR for Suicide Prevention* to their community. Participants learned about the nature of suicidal communications, what forms these communications take and how they may be used as the stimulus for a QPR intervention. To gain perspective, participants were introduced to the history of suicide, suicide prevention and the spectrum of modern day public health suicide prevention education efforts. Participants then learned to market QPR, target potential Gatekeepers, and how to teach the QPR curriculum. Participants also learned to deal with pent up audience demand to talk about suicide, survivor issues and how to make immediate interventions and referrals. Each participant had the opportunity for individual rehearsal and practice through role-plays.



Research: Reducing Suicide by Teaching Physicians

<https://www.afsp.org/index.php/research/afsp-research-highlights/reducing-suicide-by-teaching-physicians>

Hungary had one of the highest rates of suicide in the world when AFSP funded a study to teach general practitioners to identify and treat depressed patients to lower suicide rates.

This study was aimed at improving physicians' skills at assessing depression and suicidal ideation and behavior in patients. In one region, physicians received a four-session education program about depression and its treatment as well as access to mental health consultation. A second region with comparable suicide rates did not receive the training. Suicide rates in the five years before the program (1996–2000) were compared with rates during the five years after the program (2001–2005). Suicide rates decreased in the intervention region and the control region as well as the county and the country as a whole over the five years, with greater decreases in the region that received the education program.

In addition to reduced suicide rates, they found that in the intervention region there were increases in antidepressant prescription rates. This study demonstrates that educating the medical community about depression and its treatment reduces suicide rates.

Suicide prevention toolkits for rural primary care providers are available for download off the Montana Suicide Prevention website at www.prc.mt.gov/suicideprevention

Workshop teaches professionals how to help those grieving after a suicide



On April 18th and 19th, The Tamarack Grief Resource Center sponsored, in collaboration with the Montana DPHHS and other local sponsors, a two-day workshop in Missoula on working with clients experiencing grief, with the second day focusing specifically on grief after suicide. The workshop was facilitated by Dr. John (Jack) Jordan, a nationally renowned expert on treating grief after suicide out of Wellesley, MA. Over 100 professionals from the Missoula area and around the state of Montana attended the conference. The workshop looked at bereavement through twin factors: the nature of the

relationship with the deceased, and the nature of the death – and how they can combine to create complicated grief. The workshop explored the implications of this perspective for assessment and intervention, focused on new techniques for helping the bereaved to deal with both the trauma of the death, and the loss of the relationship. The second day focused on the impact of suicide on survivors, with clinical and support responses that are needed after a suicide occurs. The workshop included didactic presentation, group discussion and case examples from the speaker's practice.

Topics covered included; a brief review of the epidemiology and contributing factors involved in most suicides; the psychological impact of suicide on survivors; common themes in the bereavement of survivors; risk factors for complicated grief after suicide; and postvention options to help survivors.

Montana Chapter of AFSP expanding Gatekeeper Training in Montana

By Joan Nye, President, Montana Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

"Just as people trained in CPR help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize and respond to a person who might be suicidal."

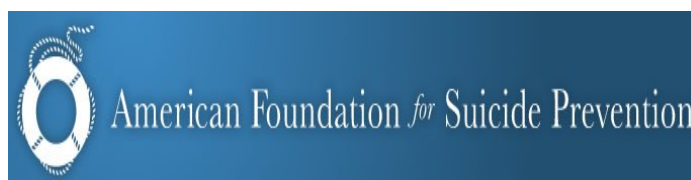
Since its formation in 2001, the Montana Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) has supported widespread QPR Gatekeeper training. QPR: Question Persuade Refer, is a 60-90 minute suicide prevention class for everyone. In the past two years the chapter has paid for another 14 people to become certified QPR instructors and has provided the QPR materials distributed to class participants. Just as people trained in CPR help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize and respond to a person who might be suicidal.

Another gatekeeper training is safeTALK (Suicide Alertness For Everyone). This class uses a carefully crafted set of

helping steps and creative educational processes that make it possible in three hours to become willing/able suicide alert helpers. The Montana Chapter of AFSP now offers safeTALK classes (each class is for 15-30 people), and this year is planning a two-day session to train 10 new safeTALK trainers. If you are committed to teach this class several times a year in Montana or have questions, please contact Joan, joan-nye@iwks.net.

The Montana Chapter of AFSP's primary source of funding are the Out of the Darkness

Community Walks. Five community walks are scheduled in Montana this year: Helena, Miles City, Billings, Livingston, Missoula. For more information please go to www.outofthedarkness.org, click on "find an event", and type the city's name in blank box. **Join in these fun, colorful events for raising awareness and money for suicide prevention. Register now – it's free! Contact information is available at each Walk's webpage.**



Facebook provides first-of-a-kind service to help prevent suicides

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline collaborate with Facebook to help those in crisis.

Taken from <http://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/advisories/1112125820.aspx>

Facebook is announcing a new service that harnesses the power of social networking and crisis support to help prevent suicides across the nation and Canada. The new service enables Facebook users to report a suicidal comment they see posted by a friend to Facebook using either the [Report Suicidal Content](#) link or the report links found throughout the site. The person who posted the suicidal comment will then immediately receive an e-mail from Facebook encouraging them to call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or to click on a link to begin a confidential chat session with a crisis worker.



The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/> is a toll-free suicide prevention hotline network comprised of 152 local crisis centers. The Lifeline is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and administered by Link2Health Solutions, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Mental Health Association of New York City (MHA-NYC). The Lifeline provides free and confidential crisis counseling to anyone in need 24/7 and has answered over 3 million calls since its launch in 2005.

"We're proud to expand our partnership with Lifeline, and to provide those in crisis with even more options to seek help," said Facebook's Chief Security Officer, Joe Sullivan. "The Lifeline's commitment to suicide prevention has enabled people on Facebook to get fast, meaningful help when they need it most, and we look forward to continuing our work with them to help save lives."

"Facebook and the Lifeline are to be commended for addressing one of this nation's most tragic public health problems," said Surgeon General, Regina M. Benjamin, MD, MBA, who serves with Sullivan on the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention. "Nearly 100 Americans die by suicide every day – 36,035 lives every year. For every person who is murdered, two die by suicide. These deaths are even more tragic because they are preventable. We have effective treatments to help suicidal individuals regain hope and a desire to live and we know how powerful personal connections and support can be. Therefore we as a nation must do everything we can to reach out to those at risk and provide them the help and hope needed to survive and return to productive lives with their family, friends, and communities."

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Crisis center workers from two centers in the Lifeline network, the Boys Town National Hotline and Goodwill of the Finger Lakes' 2-1-1/LIFE LINE, will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to respond to Facebook users opting to use the chat. The Lifeline currently responds to dozens of people each day who have expressed suicidal thoughts on Facebook.

"We have been partnering with Facebook since 2006 to assist at-risk users and are thrilled to launch this new service," said John Draper, Ph.D., the Lifeline's project director and MHA-NYC Vice President of Behavioral Health Technology. "Although the Lifeline on average handles 70,000 calls per month, we have heard from our Facebook fans and others that there are many people in crisis who don't feel comfortable picking up the phone. This new service provides a way for them to get the help they need in the way they want it." For more information on this topic please visit the SAMHSA Blog at <http://blog.samhsa.gov/2011/12/13/facebook-provides-first-of-a-kind-service-to-help-prevent-suicides>.



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Are there suicide prevention activities going on in your community that you want to share? Please let us know and we will include it in this newsletter. Send your information to Karl Rosston at krosston@mt.gov.

Recent QPR and ASIST trainers that have occurred around the state

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) is a 2-day intensive training for those who work with high risk populations. Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) teaches how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help, and can be delivered in 1-2 hours to everybody. Both are nationally recognized as best practices.

ASIST Trainings

1/14-15, 2013	Poplar
1/28-29, 2013	Poplar
1/18-19, 2013	Pablo
1/18-19, 2013	Miles City
2/4-5, 2013	Wolf Point
3/15-16, 2013	Salish Kootenai College
4/15-16, 2013	Lame Deer
4/23-24, 2013	Plains
4/29-30, 2013	Glendive
5/7-8, 2013	Crow Agency

QPR Trainings

1/4/13	Bozeman Deaconess Hospital
1/11/13	MT Law Enforcement Acad.
1/17/13	Missoula Pre-Release
1/24/13	Helena College (Psychology)
2/4-8, 2013 (6)	MT Law Enforcement Acad.
2/14/13	Helena College (Nursing)
2/18/13	Huntley Project High School
2/19/13	Helena Capital High School

QPR Trainings (continued)

2/21/13	Butte-Mariah's Challenge Conf.
3/1/13	Office of Aging- Helena
3/12/13	L&C Detention Center-Helena
3/19/13	Univ. of Montana (Counseling)
3/21/13	Helena College (Psychology)
3/28/13	MT Law Enforcement Acad.
4/3/13	Carroll College (Nursing)
4/11/13	Lame Deer
4/12/13	Hardin High School
4/17/13	Helena- Child Abuse Conference
4/24/13	Gardiner High School
4/26/13	MT Law Enforcement Acad.
5/13/13	Bozeman (Community training)
5/16/13	Helena (WMMHC)
5/17/13	Butte (WMMHC Drop-In Center)



Firearm Safety Program providing Gunlocks to local communities

Need resources for your suicide prevention efforts? Start by visiting the Montana Suicide Prevention website for data, research articles, toolkits, handouts, and additional information. Go to www.prc.mt.gov/suicideprevention

The Montana Suicide Prevention Program recently received 1,400 gunlocks through the Rural Veterans Grant to promote firearm safety in Montana. Montana has one of the highest rates of suicide in the nation. Over 65% of the suicides in Montana are by firearms, which is significantly higher than the national average. The Montana Suicide Prevention Program is promoting efforts to reduce access to lethal means of suicide among individuals with identified suicide risk. **This program adheres to the goals identified in the 2012 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (<http://store.samhsa.gov/product/>**

[National-Strategy-for-Suicide-Prevention-2012-Goals-and-Objectives-for-Action/PEP12-NSSPGOALS](#))

The program also aims at increasing awareness of the warning signs of suicide, ways of talking with a suicidal person, and the number for the Montana Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Over 10,000 of the high quality combination locks have been distributed to a number of county health departments and reservations. The locks have been handed out at various community settings including community music events, hunter safety courses, home health care visits,

tribal events, and child care organizations. The target populations are families with children who have unprotected firearms in the home. The program, in its fifth year, has been nationally recognized by the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (part of SAMHSA) and the Children's Safety Network (<http://www.childrenssafetynetwork.org/spotlight/preventing-firearms-related-suicide-montana>)